

**CULTURAL AND PRAGMATIC DIFFERENCE OF COMPLIMENTS IN UZBEK  
AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES**

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**Annotation:** This article analyzes the cultural and pragmatic aspects of compliments in Uzbek and English. Compliments serve as an important means of strengthening social relationships between people, and their formation is closely related to the interaction between language and culture. The study examines the styles, purposes, and cultural differences in giving compliments in English and Uzbek. In addition, it discusses the translation challenges that may arise and the strategies for overcoming them.

**Keywords:** Compliment, pragmatics, culture, translation, social interaction, English language, Uzbek language

**КУЛЬТУРНЫЕ И ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИЕ РАЗЛИЧИЯ КОМПЛИМЕНТОВ В  
УЗБЕКСКОМ И АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ**

**Аннотация:** В данной статье анализируются культурные и прагматические аспекты комплиментов в узбекском и английском языках. Compliments являются важным средством укрепления социальных отношений между людьми, а их формирование тесно связано со взаимодействием языка и культуры. В исследовании рассматриваются стили, цели и культурные различия в выражении комплиментов на английском и узбекском языках. Кроме того, обсуждаются проблемы, возникающие при переводе, и стратегии их преодоления.

**Ключевые слова:** Compliment, прагматика, культура, перевод, социальная коммуникация, английский язык, узбекский язык.

**O‘ZBEK VA INGLIZ TILLARIDA KOMPLIMENTLARNING MADANIY VA  
PRAGMATIK FARQLARI**

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada o‘zbek va ingliz tillarida komplimentlarning madaniy va pragmatik jihatlari tahlil qilinadi. Complimentlar insonlar o‘rtasidagi ijtimoiy munosabatlarni mustahkamlashda muhim vosita bo‘lib, ularning shakllanishi til va madaniyat o‘zaro ta’siri bilan chambarchas bog‘liqdir. Tadqiqot davomida ingliz va o‘zbek tillarida kompliment aytishning uslublari, maqsadlari hamda madaniy farqlari o‘rganiladi. Shuningdek, tarjimada yuzaga keladigan muammolar va ularni yengish strategiyalari ham ko‘rib chiqiladi.

**Kalit so‘zlar.:** Compliment, pragmatika, madaniyat, tarjima, ijtimoiy muloqot, ingliz tili, o‘zbek tili.

**Introduction:** Compliments play an essential role in human communication, serving as tools for building rapport, expressing admiration, and maintaining positive social relationships. Despite their universality, the way compliments are expressed, interpreted, and responded to differs greatly across cultures. In English and Uzbek societies, compliments not only function as linguistic expressions of politeness but also reflect cultural norms, social hierarchy, and

interpersonal distance [1]. While English compliments often emphasize individuality and achievement, Uzbek compliments tend to highlight community, respect, and collective values [2]. Understanding these differences is essential for effective intercultural communication and accurate translation between the two languages.

**Main part:** The study of compliments has been approached from pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspectives. According to Holmes (1988), a compliment is a speech act that explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually for a positive quality or possession [1]. In English, compliments are often short, formulaic, and directed toward personal appearance or achievements. For instance, expressions like “You look great today!” or “Good job!” are common in daily interaction. They are direct, positive, and often function as a social lubricant in casual or formal encounters.

In contrast, Uzbek compliments tend to be more indirect and context-dependent. Compliments often appear as part of a longer exchange that includes politeness strategies such as humility and denial. For example, when someone is praised for their outfit with the phrase “Juda chiroyli kiyingansiz” (You are beautifully dressed), the typical response might be “Qayerda endi” (Not really), which shows modesty and cultural emphasis on humility [4]. Such responses help maintain social harmony and prevent perceptions of arrogance.

Culturally, English compliments reflect an individualistic orientation. People are encouraged to acknowledge compliments with gratitude, often responding with “Thank you.” This direct acceptance aligns with Western norms of self-confidence and personal expression [5]. Uzbek culture, however, values collective identity and modesty. Therefore, accepting a compliment without softening it can be perceived as boastful. The pragmatic rule of denying a compliment in Uzbek serves as a social mechanism for demonstrating respect and humility [2].

Another major difference lies in gender roles and topics of complimenting. Studies have shown that in English-speaking cultures, women tend to give and receive more compliments than men, particularly on appearance or fashion [5]. In Uzbek society, compliments are often tied to social status and moral qualities rather than physical attributes. It is more acceptable to compliment a woman on her hospitality, kindness, or family rather than her looks, which reflects the cultural importance of modesty and virtue [4].

From a translational perspective, compliments are challenging because they often involve implicit cultural meanings [3]. A literal translation may sound unnatural or even inappropriate in the target language. For example, translating the English compliment “You’re amazing!” directly into Uzbek as “Siz ajoyibsiz!” may sound exaggerated or formal. Instead, translators may adapt it to a more culturally fitting expression like “Siz juda yoqimlisiz” or “Sizni hurmat qilaman,” depending on the context. This process, known as pragmatic adaptation, helps preserve the social meaning rather than the literal form [3].

Furthermore, compliment exchanges demonstrate how politeness strategies differ between English and Uzbek speakers. According to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) Politeness Theory, speakers use positive and negative politeness strategies to maintain social harmony [2]. English speakers often use positive politeness, focusing on solidarity and friendliness, while Uzbek speakers rely more on negative politeness, emphasizing respect and formality [1][4]. This distinction affects how compliments are formulated and responded to.

Despite differences, both languages use compliments to reinforce social cohesion and emotional connection. They serve as verbal tools to reduce tension, express gratitude, or strengthen interpersonal bonds. Understanding the pragmatic nuances of compliments can help translators, language learners, and intercultural communicators navigate social interactions more effectively [3][5].

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, compliments are universal yet deeply culture-bound elements of communication. The comparison between English and Uzbek compliments reveals how language reflects social values and cultural norms [4]. English compliments tend to prioritize directness, positivity, and self-expression, while Uzbek compliments emphasize humility, respect, and community-oriented values [1][2]. These differences highlight the importance of understanding pragmatics and culture in language use and translation [3]. Further research in this area can contribute to intercultural competence and improve cross-cultural communication [5].

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